

Monterey County: Letter to My Sons

[00:00:00] **Kim Tran:** My dear sons: coming to the US when I was 19 and attending the Monterey Peninsula College in the early seventies is an experience I've never forgotten. Putting aside the hippie attires, my classmates with long hair and unshaved beards reminded me of those famous writers of the past. Like [?] And Shakespeare. White students sat in class with their legs resting on the desk and asked questions to professors with a tone I never could dare to master.

I lead a very sheltered life when I was home in Vietnam, and this never happened nor was tolerated. I took it all in with this wonderful kind of freedom of living, but I felt homesick. Deeply missing my parents [00:01:00] and siblings living in the war-torn country. The war was still raging. I wondered when it would end. I often had nightmares about people who got killed by the communists or VC, flashbacks of farmers who got beheaded for resisting the VC, lying on a sand pen docked by the wharf, offloading in the river, running through our village often went through my head. So much is at stake right now. China has illegally occupied Vietnam's land, sea, and islands, the Paracel and Spratly Islands, has killed Vietnamese Fishmen who fish within Vietnamese waters, has polluted our waterways, et cetera.

It breaks my heart on recent news from Vietnam about protesters who have gotten arrested and brutally beaten for demonstrating against the Communist government who plans to lease [00:02:00] Vietnam's three special economic zones or SEZ to China for 99 years. If approved, it means Vietnam would lose these strategic zones together with other previously leased zones forever, including Vietnam sovereignty.

Vietnamese people are fighting for their own survival. I hope you, good Vietnamese Americans, will continue to fight for democracy in Vietnam so that the people there can have the same freedom you have enjoyed in America.[00:03:00]